

PRIME MINISTER

GORBACHEVS' VISIT: MEDIA

This note looks at the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Gorbachev tomorrow from a media point of view.

For the media there are two visits rolled into one - your talks with Mr. Gorbachev; and Mrs. Gorbachev's programme, for which Terry Perks is personally handling the media.

Objective

Our objective is for the visit to be seen that:

- (i) you have extended and deepened Britain's relationship with Mr. Gorbachev and the Soviet Union and are identified with the balanced and verifiable arms reduction process. (For who has done more to keep it on the rails?); and
- (ii) Mrs. Gorbachev has an enjoyable and trouble-free time here - and nothing more, I think, can be done to stand between the media and mischief.

Current Stance

I think your stance in advance of tomorrow is OK, once we have today dealt with the tendency in some of the Sundays to see your approach to SDI as compromise-seeking rather than as managing the way forward.

Handling the Media

For tomorrow there are two aspects to your talks:

substance; and
theatre....

both of which are important to public perceptions.

The substance will be dealt with in what is said after the meeting; the theatre will come in your public contacts with Mr. and Mrs. Gorbachev and the other Russian leaders.

On theatre - and leaving aside the ceremonial trimmings - the most inconsequential incident can catch the media's imagination. There are three crucial points:

- your greeting for Mr. and Mrs. Gorbachev at the steps of the plane;
- the pre-talks photocall;
- your farewell appearance before the media on the steps of the Officers' Mess before Mr. Gorbachev takes his leave; this is the most important point and is one which ideally should combine a little seriousness with manifest good humour.

I should add that on each and every occasion the media will try to get a three-way - media, you and Mr. Gorbachev - conversation going, with the aim of embarrassing both of you. It will be better tomorrow not to rise to their bait at all, if only out of consideration for Mr. Gorbachev.

Press Conference

I have thought long and hard about a Press Conference and discussed it with Charles, and finally come round to Charles' view that you should give one.

My worries stemmed from how it might be seen in the USA, on the basis of my contacts with American journalists. But there really is no substitute on such an important occasion as this for your telling the world first-hand what went on rather than my retailing it second-hand.

But in conducting a Press Conference, you need to have in mind the following critical points mentioned to me by the media:

- you have engineered the meeting with Mr. Gorbachev "to upstage Reagan";
- you want to "wash Reagan's head" - or, more elegantly, to ensure that the Western position is clearly on record before Mr. Reagan stumbles over his prompt cards;
- "to ensure that Gorbachev knows what the West's real position is" - i.e. before Reagan blurts out his objective of a nuclear-free world;
- "to show the world who really runs the show";
- "to put on a show to convince American conservatives INF really is OK".

So far as Mr. Gorbachev is concerned, the media will want to know:

- whether you have detected he is going to take any new initiative in Washington;
- your assessment of his position, post Yeltsin, and his prospects;
- any light touch between you and Mrs. Gorbachev, such as what you talked about, and whether she has told you anything about her school visit;
- I attach a draft speaking note for your Press Conference at Annex I.

Radio and Television Interviews

If you wish, I can lay on the usual four BBC radio and

television, ITN and IRN interviews afterwards. These are not likely to add much to the Press Conference, but they would be worth doing if only to produce a more tailor-made radio and television product. Agree?

B. Ingham

p.p. Bernard Ingham

6 December 1987

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ANNEX I

DRAFT SPEAKING NOTE :

PRESS CONFERENCE

It has been a great pleasure to meet

Mr. and Mrs. Gorbachev again and to have a talk with Mr. Gorbachev, if only for two hours, on his way to what will be an historic summit in Washington.

We are, after all, on the eve of the first ever agreement between the major powers to reduce, and indeed eliminate, certain classes of nuclear weapons.

As one who has discussed the approach to this agreement with both President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev, I shall share their sense of achievement tomorrow.

My concern, therefore, in picking up my long talks with Mr. Gorbachev in Moscow at the end of March was primarily to look forward to see how we can build on an INF agreement, and

to look forward in two ways:

- first, to how we can develop East/West relations to secure further reductions in armaments and forces on the basis of mutual confidence; and

- second, to hear from Mr. Gorbachev of the progress he is making with his historic and courageous undertaking in the Soviet

Union - namely Perestroika, the restructuring of Soviet society to try to make the system delivered more for the Russian people.

I must say that, as on previous occasions, I have had a thoroughly valuable and of course stimulating discussion with Mr. Gorbachev. We have ranged widely under the two broad headings also to take in:

- human rights, where I welcomed what has been done but pressed for more;

- Afghanistan, where I expressed the hope that there would be a Soviet withdrawal;

- the Middle East, where I pressed an international conference as the right way forward;

- Anglo/Soviet trade, which we both pledged to develop when I was in Moscow.

You all know my position - as indeed does

Mr. Gorbachev - as a staunch and loyal ally of the United States within NATO and in no way a go-between.

That is the whole basis of our very frank but very friendly discussions.

And in looking forward to the development of the arms control process, I made broadly four points:

- (i) I want Mr. Gorbachev's summit with President Reagan to be a success and I welcome very much indeed the INF agreement they intend to sign tomorrow;

(ii) I see as the next steps a START agreement cutting strategic nuclear weapons by 50%, the elimination of chemical weapons and the establishment of a conventional balance;

(iii) I see no scope for further reductions in nuclear weapons in Europe until there is a balance in conventional forces and chemical weapons have been eliminated;

(iv) as I said in Moscow on 30 March I support SDI, and I see the most promising way forward here towards a START agreement as a commitment by the USA and the USSR not to withdraw from the ABM Treaty for a specified period, together with forecasts by both sides of their intended research programmes.

This, I believe, would provide the necessary mutual confidence for another

step forward in the arms control process.

Mr. Gorbachev, I am sure, appreciated what I had to say, and I found his account of Perestroika fascinating.

He is a decisive, determined and courageous leader, and I hope that he succeeds in his colossal task, for in doing so that will enlarge human freedom and happiness.

The Foreign Secretary has had similarly useful and interesting talks with Mr. Shevardnadze, and I am delighted that Mrs. Gorbachev has apparently enjoyed her visit to a nearby school, where I am sure they have had a day they will never forget.

I hope that Mr. and Mrs. Gorbachev will return soon for a longer visit.

We shall be delighted to see them.

cc Mr Ingham
Mr Powell
Mr Perks
Press Officers

PRIME MINISTER

MR GORBACHEV'S VISIT : PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements have been made:-

Aircraft Arrival

Platform as illustrated on Page 6 of the official programme. Restricted to photographers and television only to cover arrival, greeting, guard of honour and motorcade. No facilities for questions.

Television cameras and a few still photographers will also be positioned on the roof of the terminal buildings to cover the aircraft landing and taxi-ing and offer another angle of the arrival formalities.

Talks in the Officers' Mess

A small photographic and television pool will be positioned in the room for your talks with Mr Gorbachev, to cover your arrival and subsequent photocall. They will then be removed from the building.

After the Talks

A small platform will house a pool of television, photographers and reporters (50-60 persons) outside of the Officers' Mess to cover your oral statements. Separate microphones will be installed for you and Mr Gorbachev at the front of the porch. Microphones will also be installed for the interpreters.

Aircraft Departure

The same platform and terminal-roof facilities will be available as for the arrival. No microphones.

Mrs Gorbachev

Separate press arrangements are being made for Mrs Gorbachev's programme.



MICHAEL BATES
PRESS OFFICE

4 December 1987